

1. Colossians is very similar to Ephesians:
 - a. Paul wrote both letters from prison in Rome.
 - b. Both were carried to the churches by Tychicus.
 - c. They both talk about wisdom, fullness and mystery.
 - d. They both emphasize the “body of Christ”, but from different angles.
2. A good summary statement of Colossians: The Supremacy of Christ
3. The city of Colossae: It was a city in decline and though it was in an unimportant place, it was important to God and to Paul.
4. Paul’s description of the Colossian believers:
 - a. They had faith.
 - b. They had love for each other.
 - c. They had hope, stored up for them in heaven. Hope: “The assured certainty of what God has promised to do.”
5. Christological teaching: “the truth that it (the Book of Colossians) gives us about the person and work of Christ.
6. The false teaching Paul warns them about:
 - a. Asceticism - “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch” legalism
 - b. Angel worship
 - c. Emphasis on special mysteries - knowledge to which ordinary Christians could not have access (Gnosticism)These all have the effect of taking the focus off Jesus, but He is the center. He is supreme.
7. Christ’s person:
 - a. He existed from eternity past with the Father.
 - b. He is the agent of creation.
 - c. All creation exists for the sake of Christ.
 - d. He is the head of the church.
 - e. He is the “fullness of God”.
 - f. He is truly God, just as much as He was truly man: One Person...Two Natures, utterly unique (God the Father has One Nature and Three Persons)
8. Jesus is “the firstborn over all creation”.
 - a. This makes it sound like Jesus was a created being, but when interpreted in the light of the passage surrounding it, and in the light of the rest of Scripture, we see that this is not true.
 - b. In the Greek, the word “firstborn” really means “preeminent” or “prior to”. (Solomon is described as David’s “firstborn” - he was not born first, he was the “preeminent” son.
9. Christ’s work: His work was to “reconcile all creation to God through the blood He shed on the cross”. This is NOT ‘universalism’ - Paul makes it very clear in the next paragraph that it only takes effect when we repent and believe.
10. Paul’s prayer in Chapter 2 - go back and read it again and see how he prayed for those new believers and what his goals were for them.

1. Colossians is divided into 2 parts, doctrine and practical application. Today we learned what a Christian looks like who truly understands the supremacy of Christ.

2. Colossians has the same pattern here as Ephesians:

- a. There is the command - "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly."
- b. There is one verse about praise.
- c. There is one verse about thanksgiving.
- d. Then on to submission:
 - *Wives and husbands
 - *Children and fathers
 - * Slaves (employees) and masters (employers)

3. Being "filled with the Spirit" is the command in Ephesians...letting "the Word of Christ dwell in us richly" is the command in Colossians.

"The New testament never tells is to seek some power encounter or spiritual high. What it does tell us is that the Christian life is all about recognizing Christ as supreme in our theology, and then making Him supreme in our life; and the first step to knowing Christ better is knowing and obeying His Word."

4. "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." (Colossians 3:1) - Focus!

5. Chapters 3 and 4 - The process of sanctification

- a. "Putting off and putting on" - Put on Christ and put off the sinful habits of the flesh.
- b. Prayer - Paul asks that, even in prison, he will be able to proclaim the gospel and he asks them to be devoted to prayer.

6. Mark, Barnabas' cousin:

- a. He deserted Paul on the first missionary journey.
- b. Barnabas leaves Paul to help Mark.
- c. Mark has grown up and Paul has changed his mind about him; he is now a valued colleague. God forgives and gives second opportunities.

7. Onesimus is mentioned in Colossians and is the subject of the Book of Philemon.

- a. Onesimus was a runaway slave; Philemon was his master.
- b. Onesimus found Paul in Rome.
- c. He was converted to Christianity.
- d. Paul sends him home with a letter to Philemon.
- e. Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus and restore, not to being just a slave again, but as a brother in Christ.
- f. Paul offers to pay any debt Onesimus may owe Philemon himself.
- g. One of the bishops in the church in Asia Minor at the very end of the first century was named Onesimus.

8. The prominence of small group house churches that met in individual homes is strikingly evident. They were a great environment for the discipling of God's people.

1. The three major voices in the early church were Paul, the great church-planting apostle, John the Beloved, whom we have not yet read, and Peter. Mark's gospel was the stories Mark wrote down that he got directly from Peter. Today's reading is written by Peter himself.
2. Peter is writing to "God's elect strangers" - or people who have been scattered all over Asia Minor.
3. One of the letters major themes is suffering - these people either are, or are about to be, suffering persecution, simply because they have chosen to become Christians. James 1, Romans 8 and I Peter 1-4 all deal with the subject of suffering,
4. "Chosen strangers": The most significant thing that can be said of us as God's child is that we have been "chosen." We are chosen for obedience to Christ.
5. In the face of so much suffering, is it worth it to be a Christian? Peter's answer:
 - a. Yes - We are "...born again into a living hope..."
 - b. Yes - We have an inheritance that is imperishable, unspoilable, and unfading
 - c. Yes - We have an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you - and you are being kept by God for that inheritance
 - d. Knowing this paragraph of Scripture gives strength, perspective and focus to life.
6. 1 Peter 1 tells us that the great purpose of suffering is:
 - a. To refine us
 - b. To prove to us and others that our faith is genuine and firm
 - c. It is like the refining of gold - when god can look down and see His won reflection in us, then the process will be complete.
7. How we are to act in times of suffering: Bear up patiently, like Christ did. (1 Peter 2:21ff)and keep on committing ourselves to the One who judges all things righteously, like Jesus did. (2:23)
8. A great description of what happened on the cross - (1 Peter 2:24, 25)
9. Call to holiness (1 Peter 1:15, 16) - "Be holy, because I am holy."
 - a. Leviticus 11:44, 45 - God's word tot the ancient Israelites is repeated many times in the New Testament.
 - b. He gives the reason of facing judgment someday as a reason to be holy.
 - c. He gives the better reason of understanding the cost of our salvation as a high motivation for being holy.
10. A description of who we are in Christ:
 - a. A chosen people
 - b. A royal priesthood
 - c. A holy nation
 - d. A people belonging to God
 - e. The people of God
 - f. Receivers of mercy
11. The purpose of who we are in Christ: "...that you may declare the praised of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."

1. Suffering for doing good:
 - a. Christians often suffer for doing good, and actually ought to suffer for doing good.
 - b. We ought to respond by doing good to the perpetrators of evil against us.
 - c. Suffering is a way of proving that we have mastered sin.
 - d. Suffering helps us focus on the truly important things, and sort out the trivial from the important.
 - e. We should not be surprised by suffering.
 - f. Peter (and Paul) considered it a privilege to be able to suffer for Christ.
 - g. The power of joy in the face of suffering draws others to Christ (ex. - Tertullian)
 - h. We should make sure we are suffering because we are honoring Christ, not because of our won wrong actions.
2. “Submit to one another.” - Peter, like Paul, emphasizes submission as one of the chief characteristics of the Spirit-filled life. Peter talks (as Paul did) about husbands and wives, and slaves and masters.
3. 1 Peter 5:5: “Clothe yourselves with humility.”
 - a. This word “clothe” is a made-up word used only once in the New Testament. (That is called a ‘hapaxlegommenon’).
 - b. It literally means, “Put on the apron of humility.”
 - c. It refers back to the Last Supper when Jesus put on the apron of the lowest slave and washed His disciples feet - Peter never forgot that sight. He coined a word to remind us that we are to serve one another by ‘putting on the apron of humility’.
4. Chapter 5 - The grace of humility
 - a. It is the opposite of pride (vs. 5) in the arena of human relationships.
 - b. It is the opposite of anxiety (vs. 6) in the arena of circumstances.
 - 1) We can trust God to take care of us, because of His “mighty hand.”
 - a) He has the power to rescue us.
 - b) He has a plan to exalt us at the proper time.
 - c) He loves us.
 - 2) “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

1. 2 Peter, which Peter (Simon, Simeon) wrote at the end of his life, addresses false teaching and immorality.
2. Peter is an apostle, a servant, and an eyewitness of Christ's majesty.
3. He gives us an inkling of the process of inspiration in the writing down of Scripture (vss. 20, 21):
 - a. "No prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation."
 - b. "Prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
 - c. Meaning - "The Holy Spirit somehow takes charge of the prophet, the apostle, when they are writing Scripture, and 'carries them along; to the destination that He chooses.'"
4. The issue of false teachers:
 - a. The exhortations to holiness and the authority of the Scriptures are there as a prelude to talking about false teachers.
 - b. The characteristics of false teachers (which they defend on principle);
 - 1) Laxity in morals; impurity
 - a) Covetousness, lovers of money
 - b) Impatient with authority
 - c) Irreverent
 - d) Full of pride
 - 2) They twist Scripture.
 - a) They misused Paul's words to defend their "Christian liberty".
 - a. Paul's "liberty" was the freedom to not sin anymore.
 - b. The false teachers' "liberty" was seen as freedom to sin.
 - b) They take the Bible and make it teach something which is exactly the opposite of what it really is teaching.
 - 3) They deny the Christian hope of the return of Jesus.
 - a) They emphasized the permanence of the world.
 - b) No expectation of judgment also gave license to sin.
5. The return of Christ even today has been disconnected from its ethical connection.
 - a. In the New Testament, the coming of Christ is always connected to an ethical injunction. Jesus is coming, "therefore":
 - 1) Be holy
 - 2) Don't sin
 - 3) Treat each other well
 - 4) Expect it - be ready
 - b. The intellectual questions about the second coming are fascinating, but not the main thing.
6. The Book of Jude talks about some of the same things in regard to false teachers as does 2 Peter.
 - a. Denial of the Master who bought them
 - b. Gnostic heresy
 - c. Unafraid of spiritual powers, good or bad
7. We do not need to be the victims of false teaching because we have the Word of God.